REMARKS

By the present amendment, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claims 2 and 3. Claims 2 and 3 have been cancelled.

In Paragraph 7 of the Office action, claims 2-3, 7, 16, 17 and 19-20 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reeves or Simpson in view of Siga as applied to claims 1, 4-5, 10, 14-15, 17 and 19-20 and further in view of Zou.

By the present Amendment, claims 2 and 3 have been incorporated into claim 1. In this regard, none of the cited references teach or suggest the utilization of the silver iodide complex forming agent in a photothermographic material having a photosensitive silver halide having a silver iodide content of 70 mol% or more or the unexpectedly remarkable effects obtained thereby.

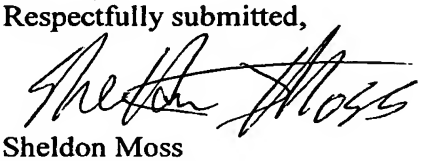
The rejection in Paragraph 7 of the Office action (and all other rejections in the Office action) are based in part on Siga. Siga apparently was cited because of the description in the specification concerning a preference for using a silver halide having a larger silver iodide content. However, those skilled in the art would not be motivated to combine the disclosure of Siga with conventional photothermographic materials such as those described in Reeves, Simpson, Zou or the present invention. This is because Siga teaches a post-activation type photothermographic material, which uses the specific components of an oxidizing agent and a photoreactive halogeno oxidizing agent, and has the characteristics of nonphotosensitivity under normal lighting conditions but is rendered photosensitive by preliminary heating (heat activation) so as to be capable of recording. As noted in column 1 of Siga, Siga uses a different image forming mechanism from conventional photothermographic materials.

Further, there is no motivation to combine Siga with Simpson and/or Zou because Siga teaches the utilization of a silver halide having a larger silver iodide content, in contrast to Simpson, that describes the use of silver bromoiodide having 10 mol% or less of silver iodide (column 10, lines 24 to 26 of Simpson) as a preferable embodiment, and Zou, that requires silver halide grains containing 70 mol% or more of silver bromide (claim 1 of Zou).

The effects of the present invention are achieved in part by utilization of a silver iodide complex forming agent and the photosensitive silver halide having the silver iodide content of 70 mol% or more. This is supported by the comparative experimental data shown in Tables 6 and 7 on pages 292 and 300 of the specification of the present application. Specifically, samples 1-21 to 1-24, 1-31 and 1-32, each of which comparative examples uses the emulsion G or H having silver iodide and a smaller average sphere equivalent diameter than that defined in claim 1 of the present invention, exhibit significantly low sensitivities even though a silver iodide complex forming agent such as F-444 or F-431 is used in combination. Samples 1-28 to 1-30 and 1-36 to 1-38, each of which comparative examples uses the emulsion L or M having silver bromide and an average sphere equivalent diameter as defined in claim 1 of the present invention, exhibit significantly large printouts even though a silver iodide complex forming agent such as F-444 or F-431 is used in combination. In contrast, samples 1-25 to 1-27 and 1-33 to 1-35, each of which examples of the present invention uses an emulsion that satisfies the requirements of claim 1, exhibit the remarkable effects of high sensitivity, low D_{min} (fogging) and improved printout (image stability) which could not be expected from the disclosures of the cited references.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that all of the pending claims in the application are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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